

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA  
NATIONAL TRANSPORTATION AND SAFETY BOARD

- - - - -x  
In the matter of: :  
: :  
THE INVESTIGATION OF THE :  
CAPSIZING OF THE WATER TAXI : Docket No:  
LADY D IN BALTIMORE HARBOR, : DCA04MM015  
MARYLAND :  
ON MARCH 6, 2004 :  
: :  
INTERVIEW OF: :  
: :  
PETTY OFFICER SHAWN TATE :  
NAVAL RESERVE :  
: :  
- - - - -x

NTSB  
Office of Marine Safety  
MS-10  
490 L'Enfant Plaza East SW  
Washington, DC 20594  
Wednesday, March 10, 2004

The above captioned interview convened, upon agreement  
of the parties at 11:20 a.m.

BEFORE:

Mariette Burer  
National Transportation Safety Board

P R O C E E D I N G S

11:20 a.m.

MS. BURER: Okay, today is Wednesday, and it's 11:20, the ninth of March - tenth of March. My name is Mariette Burer with the National Transportation Safety Board and to my left is - go ahead and introduce yourself.

PETTY OFFICER TATE: My name is Petty Officer Shawn Tate ...

MS. BURER: Okay.

LT. BARANOWSKI: Lieutenant Scott Baranowski, Coast Guard Sector, Baltimore.

(inaudible)

MS. BURER: Okay. What I would like to do to start is with you giving me a little bit of your background as far as education.

PETTY OFFICER TATE: Okay, I'm an electrician's mate ... I worked for the city of Baltimore for approximately three years. I started off there as a ... Petty Officer, and then when ... boat off the ... I took over his position ... Basically my education is high school, some college - didn't finish the whole year, I came into the Navy. I'm an electrician.

MS. BURER: Which year did you come into the Navy?

PETTY OFFICER TATE: I came in in 1995.

1 MS. BURER: And you're career?

2 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Career. I'm going to be  
3 career Navy. My first tour was the U.S.S. George  
4 Washington, the carrier, for approximately six and a  
5 half years and then came here.

6 MS. BURER: And how long have you been here?

7 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I've been here three  
8 years.

9 MS. BURER: Three years in Baltimore?

10 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes, ma'am.

11 MS. BURER: Okay. What I would like to do is  
12 kind of get an idea of what your typical day is. So  
13 maybe what you can do, step back and say start on  
14 Thursday, when you arrived, take us all the way through  
15 the day, and then when you go to bed, same thing for  
16 Friday and then what occurred on Saturday when the  
17 accident.

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Thursday morning, you  
19 know, I woke up, got my kids ready for school -

20 MS. BURER: At what time?

21 PETTY OFFICER TATE: About 5:35 I get up, get  
22 my kids ready for school. My wife has to go to work on  
23 Thursdays so I take care of the kids, and actually I  
24 come in a little later. Thursday we were getting ready  
25 to get passport photo because I'm going overseas, and  
26 we had to take our passports in the POD (ph) Thursday.  
27 First I had the test. I had the test on ... first

1 class.

2 So - but I got my kids ready, got my wife  
3 ready in the morning - she had to go to work. I  
4 dropped the kids off at my pre-care for my son and the  
5 CDC (ph) for my daughter, and went to the school at  
6 Fort ... to take my first class exam.

7 After that, I met my family on the boat so we  
8 could take our passport photos and our passport  
9 information through the PSD (ph) office so we could get  
10 our passports, of course.

11 Then I went back to PSD to talk to my  
12 transfer coach, about the things I need to go overseas  
13 with, and the money that I'm going to need to go to  
14 school, because I'm going to go to school to advance.  
15 But I went home and I cooked dinner, sat around a lot,  
16 looked at TV with the children, played some play  
17 station with my son, went to bed -

18 MS. BURER: About what time did you go to  
19 bed?

20 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Put the kids to bed at  
21 8:30 and I stayed up, usually talk to my wife - we have  
22 our time from about - until about eleven o'clock, when  
23 we go to bed.

24 MS. BURER: Okay, and Friday morning?

25 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Friday morning - a good  
26 Friday morning, my wife took the kids because she  
27 doesn't have to go to work, so I was out of the house

1 about six o'clock, that's the way - I believe I felt  
2 ... so I stopped over at Lowe's Farm and got me some  
3 water and a doughnut. Got here to work. Did my  
4 regular maintenance routine on the boat. I go out to  
5 the boat, check the o-rings out, make sure the ... is  
6 kept on the boat. I looked through my work schedule,  
7 which is the current maritime maintenance schedule, see  
8 what kind of maintenance we have to do, requirements we  
9 have. Go through the maintenance requirements.

10 In the process of turning over from the Petty  
11 Officer ... you know, he was going over everything that  
12 I did, ... and it was about - we did that pretty much  
13 ... pulled out. Half staff is here Friday, so, you  
14 know, we pretty -- nothing to do besides that boat. In  
15 the afternoon we just sat around and did some reports,  
16 took care of some paperwork, looked at our e-mails, and  
17 that's it.

18 Go home, cook dinner - I do all the cooking,  
19 my wife don't cook - cook dinner for the children again  
20 and -

21 MS. BURER: What time did you go home?

22 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I go home - I get home -  
23 I leave here about 4:15, I get home about 5:20 because  
24 I live in Landover, over the ... to 95.

25 MS. BURER: So from 0715 to 4:15 is the  
26 regular work day?

27 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes, ma'am.

1 MS. BURER: Okay, so those are your hours,  
2 okay.

3 PETTY OFFICER TATE: So, cook dinner, took my  
4 son to buy him some sneakers for school - he needed  
5 some new sneakers. Everybody watched TV. It's Friday  
6 so I let the kids stay up a little later than normal,  
7 except from my son because the teacher called me where  
8 I worked and said he cheated on his spelling test. He's  
9 seven years old.

10 (announcement on loudspeaker)

11 MS. BURER: That's a good reminder, when the  
12 PA system comes on maybe we can just stop the  
13 conversation at that time and then pick it back up -

14 PETTY OFFICER TATE: You want me to turn the  
15 PA system off?

16 MS. BURER: No, no, no. No, absolutely not.  
17 No. But, just a reminder.

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Okay.

19 MS. BURER: Anyway, continue on with, the  
20 children watching TV -

21 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I put my son to bed  
22 early, so me and my daughter we stayed up and we  
23 watched, I think that cartoon network was on all night.  
24 And my wife had to go to work that day at six p.m., so  
25 she went to Home Depot, and she went to work at six.  
26 So me and my daughter ... stayed up until about ten,  
27 then I sent her to bed. Then I waited for my wife to

1    come home, you know, sat down a half hour, get our  
2    evening cool down we call it, we talk to each other,  
3    then I went to bed.

4                    Woke up at approximately - Saturday on drill  
5    weekend, we always wake up early because we've got to  
6    be here earlier. So I woke up about five o'clock this  
7    time, got dressed, left the house, got to work about  
8    seven fifteen, I don't remember. Went in to work, did  
9    my rounds, you know, talk to PC sort of stuff, how're  
10   you doing. ... Talked to the Chief. Went through my  
11   normal routine, looking at my reports. Since we did  
12   all the maintenance on Friday, we didn't have much to  
13   do on Saturday. So I went over to Personnel to help  
14   Romano out because he was ...

15                   About - we went to lunch, you know, got me a  
16   gyro, I think, for lunch -

17                   MS. BURER: What time did you break for  
18   lunch?

19                   PETTY OFFICER TATE: 12:15 went to lunch.

20                   MS. BURER: 12:15, okay.

21                   PETTY OFFICER TATE: Got me a gyro, sat out  
22   here, talked to - I mean ate in the chow hall in the  
23   drill boat. After that I went back up to that post up  
24   there, ... because the ... were down ... take them out  
25   and put them in a box for McKenna so when he comes back  
26   he can get it.

27                   After that, about 3:15 I started coming,

1 Chief, I'm going home, I'm out of it for the day.

2 I've been sitting in the ... all day and I said ...

3 He said, all right, go ahead.

4 When I got back over to my side of the boat  
5 where my ... are, everybody was hanging out there  
6 saying you know, sitting around talking - talking about  
7 our children, ... four o'clock and everybody - wow,  
8 it's four o'clock. I remember cutting out the - who  
9 brought the clouds in? You know, what? It's dark  
10 outside. We look outside and it was dark all of a  
11 sudden. I said, wow, and then we started seeing big -  
12 you know, big rain drops. So we didn't pay no  
13 attention ... talking and joking like we were.

14 About five minutes later, Neblett run past me  
15 and said, "Tate, you need to fire your boats up." I'm  
16 like "for what?" He said, "There's a water taxi turned  
17 over." And he took off running.

18 We came out looked out the left side of the  
19 building, ... on the boat. I was, you know, wondering  
20 who - what was going on and when I got on the boat,  
21 things like a boat capsizing, and I got down to the  
22 engine room, Petty Officer ...ni was preparing the ...  
23 in the engine room. You know, he was turning the vials  
24 on and everything. We turned the valves, turned the  
25 engine over, engines lit up. I climbed out the engine  
26 room, ran down into the landing rig, start throwing out  
27 from the ... storage room, I was throwing out all the



1 blankets I could find. I knew we didn't have a lot,  
2 but we had a couple of blankets, we had some rain  
3 jackets I was throwing out, we had some foul weather  
4 gear, we had some canvas I was throwing out, you know,  
5 just in case we need to keep people warm. I threw out  
6 a first aid kit on top.

7           And somebody was yelling, "Engage the PTO,  
8 engage the PTO." And I was in the landing rig, and  
9 they said "Engage. Engage the PTO." And I was like,  
10 you engage the PTO. I don't know who it was, but I  
11 remember that conversation.

12           And when I came up out of the landing rig and  
13 I was carrying the stuff and I threw it into the ...  
14 boat so it should be - "Engage the PTO" - so I climbed  
15 back down into the engine room and I go - the PTO is  
16 the power take off - the ... and there's one at each  
17 end, so I had engaged one. We engaged the other one.  
18 Once I engaged them, I roll them out ... close the bow  
19 ramp because, you know, responsibility - I'm  
20 responsible for boat, so I want to make sure everything  
21 is right and make sure we're doing things the right  
22 way. That was really my - I ... make sure everybody  
23 ... I was just thinking, okay the hooks -- the hooks  
24 was off, and I was like, good. The bow line was coming  
25 down, the bow was coming down.

26           Everybody threw - we got some line and we're  
27 coming closer to the pontoon boat, people were ... and

1 I was thinking, I hope that's everybody. And so we  
2 got to the pontoon boat, we threw a line and one of the  
3 guys wrapped it around the ... holding - and he pulled,  
4 tried to pull the pontoon boat closer to us, and the  
5 people come on and we was hearing people saying,  
6 "There's people under the boat. There's children under  
7 the boat."

8 And that's when Petty Office Mebley (ph)  
9 jumped into the water. Meanwhile we got everybody off  
10 the boat. I climbed back on to the - I climbed on to  
11 the pontoon boat and tried to tighten the line around  
12 the engine, because there was no where else we could  
13 tighten it. I tied it around and then I jumped in the  
14 water and I tried to get who was under - you know, see  
15 what I could see. But I couldn't see anything, so I  
16 grabbed on the side of the boat and pushed myself down  
17 and ... plastic ... rubber, and I came up, climbed up  
18 the boat -

19 (PA announcement)

20 MS. BURER: Okay.

21 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I came down - I climbed  
22 out the boat and walked back on the bow ramp and they  
23 called "Get off the bow ramp because we going to - we  
24 going to lift it up." That was a gentleman from the  
25 pilot house, "We going to lift it up. We going to lift  
26 it up. Get off the bow ramp." But I said I'm not  
27 getting off the bow ramp. You can lift it up and I'm

1 going to stay on it because somebody's going to have  
2 to watch what happens.

3           There was a guy - I think he was one of the  
4 national guard, or one of the guys on the boat. He was  
5 standing on top - someone diving - someone diving on  
6 there - I don't know - they were taking care of the  
7 people. I don't know what happened behind me, but I  
8 remember leaning on the bow ramp - that's the ramp  
9 there - I remember leaning down on the bow ramp, and I  
10 think it was the little girl, the first one that popped  
11 up that I pulled when the boat came up, the body came  
12 up from nowhere. And so I grabbed a hold of her. I  
13 was numb by this time, because I was - I thought I had  
14 her. I was screaming for the boat hook, you know,  
15 somebody give me the boat hook. When I turned around  
16 to reach for the boat hook like this, the little girl  
17 was floating away. She floated down to the end, and  
18 that's when I noticed Officer ... or some other people  
19 jumped over that side.

20           Stay here -- so I told myself to stay here,  
21 just keep looking directly, and that's when the woman  
22 came up. I couldn't reach her. I tried to wrap my  
23 legs around the wire, and I thought she was going to  
24 come up real easy, you know, I went to pull up and I  
25 got her half way up when I realized she was as big as  
26 she was, so I screamed for help. And ... McKenna  
27 running over and he grabbed her, and I pulled myself

1 back up. I had on a life vest at that time too, and  
2 I scooted myself - I remember having the life vest - I  
3 wasn't worried about I would have fell over because I  
4 had the life vest on. And I think ... McKenna -- ...  
5 McKenna grabbed her arm, when I got myself in position  
6 where I could pull myself up, and then I grabbed her  
7 arm and - I don't know, we called for help. Call for  
8 help, you know, until enough people came. Everybody  
9 came, and we got some help, but, you know, with five of  
10 us, and we still couldn't lift her up.

11 And ... King was in the water, and King, he  
12 was going on and on. I can't make - I can't - you  
13 know, do it no longer. I'm - I can't feel myself. I'm  
14 weak. I'm tired. So I was still yelling, said stay  
15 still. Grab, just hold on the rope. Don't - he kept  
16 trying to help, and I kept saying, King, stay still.  
17 Because we all was holding her - and I kept saying,  
18 stay still. Don't you move. Just stay there. So he  
19 stayed there.

20 Somebody yelled for ... Chief to lower the  
21 bow ramp, so the bow ramp lowered and we were able to  
22 pull her own, because the bow ramp was out the water  
23 about two feet. That's when the pontoon boat broke off  
24 - it broke off from it and into the water - from the  
25 bow ramp, because we had to maneuver the bow ramp  
26 underneath it to lift it up. That's where we tied the  
27 line right there and pulled it up, and when it was up,

1 that's when the bodies came up.

2           They got her up and as soon as we got her on  
3 the boat, Commander Decker started started mouth to  
4 mouth, and I started the chest compressions - every  
5 five to one because I remember saying, "Five to one,  
6 five to one. One, two, three, four, five. One, two,  
7 three, four, five." And Commander Decker give her  
8 mouth, one, two, three, four, five and never got -

9           (PA announcement, Mr. Tate continues talking)

10           PETTY OFFICER TATE: ... four, five. He  
11 couldn't do no more, then I got back and I did - and I  
12 think it was one of the guys from the boat, because he  
13 was in civilian clothes, and I'd never seen him before.  
14 And I haven't seen him since. And we had her - we got  
15 her breathing, started breathing. The fire department  
16 came alongside us, tied up where they came on the boat,  
17 and they brought out the bag when Commander Decker  
18 started with the chest compressions, and then when he  
19 put her arms up, had her by the shoulders ... lift up  
20 and put her on the stretcher - I don't know what it's  
21 called -

22           MS. BURER: The ... basket.

23           PETTY OFFICER TATE: The stoke - put her on  
24 the stoke and we strapped her on and then we lift her  
25 up and Smitty put a fire boat - after that we had to  
26 secure the bow line so nobody get away, move too fast,  
27 and of course he raised the ramp, he locked it up. I

1 sit on top and I was looking in the water, ... told  
2 me, get down, it's okay, get down, it's okay.

3 So I got myself down and I walked toward the  
4 aft of the boat and just crying - you know, with the  
5 screaming and I remember saying I got to get to up and  
6 get into the pilot. When I got past the pilot, I seen  
7 my shipmates and they were sitting there, and they were  
8 teary-eyed and you know - because I didn't realize they  
9 had the little girl and they was - I didn't know what  
10 was going on. And when I seen them, everybody just go  
11 down their own way. When we got alongside, went to the  
12 port of the boat, tied it up, threw the line over and I  
13 walked straight back and into my shop, and I threw up  
14 and that's about it.

15 After that, I came back out and I finished,  
16 you know, helping with the triage and everything, and  
17 then I - that whole time, I wasn't cold and I was wet,  
18 but I wasn't cold that whole time until later on, about  
19 seven o'clock when I realized I had some clothes in my  
20 locker here. I went and took a shower, took everything  
21 off and put my sweat clothes on - my sweat clothes, and  
22 went to the hospital.

23 MS. BURER: When you arrived back here, what  
24 did - did you have an ambulance already here?

25 PETTY OFFICER TATE: When we got here with  
26 the people?

27 MS. BURER: Yes.

1           PETTY OFFICER TATE: There was fire  
2 department, there was an EMS, there was the police  
3 department - I mean they're always ready and waiting.

4           MS. BURER: Okay, and what were they doing?

5           PETTY OFFICER TATE: They were - I think they  
6 was running onto the boat to grab the people to take  
7 care - to take the people off and clear the area.

8           MS. BURER: Right, and did you get any  
9 debriefing on this incident?

10          PETTY OFFICER TATE: You're talking about  
11 with the Red Cross?

12          MS. BURER: Whomever?

13          PETTY OFFICER TATE: We had a - the next day  
14 we had - sit around, the Red Cross - I forgot what it's  
15 called, but we had to talk about it and gave us some  
16 pointers on how to deal with the situation, and  
17 everybody dealt with it differently in their own way,  
18 and some of us are still having a hard time, you know,  
19 trying to deal with it, so -

20          MS. BURER: And when did you get actually  
21 transferred to the hospital?

22          PETTY OFFICER TATE: About 7:30.

23          MS. BURER: Okay, and who took you to the  
24 hospital?

25          PETTY OFFICER TATE: One of the Chiefs that  
26 was on the boat. The Commander had set up a van for  
27 many of us, so they were allowing people from the

1 accident just really tired or hurt to travel, so one  
2 was Chief Dunkins (ph) who was part of the crew on the  
3 boat, I drove to the hospital with him.

4 MS. BURER: Okay. When you first - let's go  
5 back all the way to when Petty Officer Neblett came  
6 around to say you need to go on the boat. How long did  
7 it take from that point, when you first heard it, to  
8 get ready -

9 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Didn't take more than -  
10 I'll tell you, when I got here, the gate was opened.  
11 Neblett said "let's go." I ran around - I sprinted  
12 around, and I'm a pretty fast runner - I sprinted  
13 around the corner, and by the time I got - the gate was  
14 opened, everybody was on the boat, only thing I did was  
15 go right down to the engine room. It couldn't have  
16 been more than three minutes from the time that we got  
17 the boat to where we got out to the spot where the  
18 people were sitting there. Before that, how long they  
19 were there, I don't know.

20 MS. BURER: Okay. And when you were  
21 actually, so when you arrived on the scene, so three  
22 minutes later, from Neblett notifying you of the  
23 accident to actually arriving on the scene, right? Do  
24 you remember - first of all, let me back up - how many  
25 people were with you on the boat?

26 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Wow - it was between 13  
27 to 15 people.



1 MS. BURER: Okay. And then once you  
2 arrived on the scene, do you remember how many people  
3 were actually sitting or swimming, or -

4 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Okay, there was only two  
5 people in the water, holding on to the side of the  
6 boat, and about eleven sitting on top.

7 MS. BURER: Okay. Weather conditions at the  
8 time?

9 PETTY OFFICER TATE: It was terrible. It was  
10 like a storm came from nowhere. The rain was coming  
11 down in big chunks, the wind was blowing fiercely. And  
12 I didn't realize that's probably why how far we drifted  
13 away from the spot, to where they was at to when we  
14 picked them up. Because it took us, you know, in that  
15 excitement, it took us - it seemed like five seconds to  
16 get there, you know, but actually took longer, because  
17 the ride back at full power, like we was going at full  
18 power, was a lot longer, you know, it was about a 15,  
19 20 minute ride back. And I was like, wow, how did we  
20 end up all the way over here past the - we passed  
21 Lehigh Cement - we was way off.

22 MS. BURER: How were - hold on. What were  
23 the weather conditions like when you arrived back?

24 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Oh, Lord, beautiful.  
25 The sun was out, rainbows was out, clouds was clear. I  
26 mean, it was bright. I think it was just my mind  
27 playing tricks on me, but when we got to the pier, all

1 of a sudden it was dim again, you know. I keep  
2 thinking that's my mind playing tricks with me. It was  
3 like cloudy, like a dark cloud was over us again.

4 MS. BURER: What about the water conditions?

5 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Inside the water?

6 MS. BURER: When you arrived on the scene,  
7 what the water conditions were like and -

8 PETTY OFFICER TATE: The water was -

9 MS. BURER: And then on your ride back?

10 PETTY OFFICER TATE: The water was - the  
11 water conditions there was rough because everything -  
12 we couldn't - we got a good bearing, a good lineup on  
13 them, but we still were shaking and rocking, even when  
14 we set the bow line ... down on the waves, you know, we  
15 was rocking pretty hard and they was going up and down  
16 pretty hard.

17 MS. BURER: Okay, and then on your ride back?  
18 You said it was sunny --

19 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I can't remember. I  
20 really don't remember that part of it. I did most of  
21 that trip in my shipmate's shoulder, with my head down.

22 MS. BURER: Who actually was on the fireboat?  
23 Who got transferred to the fireboat so that they could  
24 take the passenger in the basket?

25 PETTY OFFICER TATE: The one that come up on  
26 the victim?

27 MS. BURER: Yes, because --

1           PETTY OFFICER TATE: It was a female.

2           MS. BURER: Okay.

3           PETTY OFFICER TATE: I think it was a 30 year  
4 old lady - she wasn't an old lady, she was a younger  
5 lady. A younger, heavy-set lady ...

6           LT. BARANOWSKI: Is that the one you helped  
7 do CPR with?

8           PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes.

9           MS. BURER: Okay, so you did - you helped  
10 with the 30-year-old female?

11          PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes.

12          MS. BURER: Okay, and she was heavy-set?

13          PETTY OFFICER TATE: She was heavy set, yes.  
14 Because they was confused, because they said it was a  
15 60 year old or older lady that was heavy set, and now I  
16 know we had -- it was the two and one girl. She was  
17 pretty young, late 20's early 30's, you know, that's  
18 what I kept saying.

19          MS. BURER: How many fire boats were out  
20 there on the scene?

21          PETTY OFFICER TATE: I know the Coast Guard  
22 came. I seen one Coast Guard boat, and I didn't see  
23 them for a while, then I seen the police boat, and the  
24 fireboat from over here, because the old guy, I  
25 remember - noticed that he didn't have any shoes on.  
26 And I seen the little fire boat that took the woman ...  
27 and that's it, I think. I can't honestly say, you

1 know, because I wasn't looking for anything else, but  
2 those are the ones that came around in my vision.  
3 Could have been more, I don't know.

4 MS. BURER: Do you remember seeing any kind  
5 of debris when you arrived on the scene?

6 PETTY OFFICER TATE: No. I just seen the  
7 boat tipped over and people floating around it - life  
8 jackets. Life jackets, I seen life jackets. There  
9 were a lot of life jackets. Lot of life jackets  
10 floating, because actually we - some of us that were in  
11 the water, put on the life jacket that was in the water  
12 when we jumped in.

13 MS. BURER: Oh, from the capsized -

14 PETTY OFFICER TATE: From the capsized taxi,  
15 yes.

16 MS. BURER: When the ramp - when you lifted  
17 the boat up a little bit, what exactly happened then?  
18 You saw the bodies floating?

19 PETTY OFFICER TATE: The ramp lifted the boat  
20 up and - I - I think I had the best view because I was  
21 laying on the bow ramp like this, looking under the  
22 boat, and when the boat ramp came up, took the boat up  
23 about, I'd say, two or three feet, the bodies just  
24 came.

25 MS. BURER: How many bodies?

26 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I think three bodies on  
27 that one floated toward me - because I was over the

1 side of the bow ramp like this, one floated towards  
2 me and I saw it was a little girl, so I grabbed that.  
3 And then when I turned around I didn't see them no  
4 more, because it floated - it went under our boat, it  
5 floated back that way when she came up. And then I go,  
6 where did she go? And then the other one, the lady  
7 came out and I had to - and she was, you know, deeper  
8 in the water than - because I went to pick her up and  
9 her sweater was sticking up, but she was deeper in the  
10 water, so that's when I had to go down there and grab  
11 her.

12 The one - a man, I think it was, he came  
13 underneath it too, he came out the side of our boat -  
14 the other side too.

15 MS. BURER: So it's the little girl that came  
16 out first, then the second one who was the woman, the  
17 heavy set woman that you grabbed, right?

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes.

19 MS. BURER: And then the third one was the  
20 man that -

21 PETTY OFFICER TATE: That floated away. And  
22 the engine was off on our boat, so you know, they  
23 wouldn't have got caught up in the ... or nothing.  
24 They just came under - the way our boat was just pushed  
25 by the wind, they floated underneath and they came  
26 right back out.

27 MS. BURER: How many times did you have to

1 throw the line out to the pontoon? Did that happen  
2 at all? Do you -

3 PETTY OFFICER TATE: We got to them - I told  
4 them to grab that line - it's a big line, the line we  
5 ... on the ... guide line, and I threw and I said wrap  
6 it around. But the guy was holding it, one of the guys  
7 was holding it and I said, wrap it around, tie it up -  
8 and he was holding it, so I jumped on and I tied it up.

9 MS. BURER: Okay.

10 PETTY OFFICER TATE: And I secured us to it.

11 MS. BURER: Where did you secure it to?

12 PETTY OFFICER TATE: We had these hooks - I'm  
13 going to show you when we get there at the boat - and  
14 the rope already has an eye in it, you know, so I had  
15 that eye around a book hook - not a boat hook - taking  
16 a minute now -

17 (Discussion)

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: We didn't secure it to  
19 the bow, though. We used that to pull the fireboat  
20 closer. Okay, no we used that - we use the secure  
21 hooks for the bow lines to apply leverage to pull the  
22 boat closer against the - we hooked it up to the spoke.  
23 We have a spoke stick out -

24 MS. BURER: Okay.

25 PETTY OFFICER TATE: -- and we put the eye  
26 for the mooring line on that and then we ... so all's  
27 we had to do was wrap it around the motor I was

1 speaking about, on the pontoon boat.

2 MS. BURER: Okay.

3 PETTY OFFICER TATE: And then he was holding  
4 it, and you know, I was telling him, tie it, you know,  
5 then let it go. Don't hold it. But they got off and  
6 when they got off I jumped on and I tried to tie it up.

7 MS. BURER: And do you recall anything  
8 regarding the transfer of the passengers from the  
9 pontoon, the swimmers, the ... to your vessel?

10 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes, we had one guy go  
11 in, which is Bakala (ph) -- he went on top of it and he  
12 was helping them off and then there was me and a couple  
13 of other guys who was grabbing their hands as they  
14 walked on and we put them one. One lady ... she broke  
15 her arm, she broke her arm, so we ... with her and we  
16 just tell them to get off the boat. And some of the  
17 passengers were worried about other passengers, and I -  
18 just get off the boat. We said, you've got to get off  
19 the boat, so we take them and come on, get off the  
20 boat. And we made sure all the people were off the  
21 boat. Whoever was closest to the bow line, we wanted  
22 them off the - we didn't want them to go back to get  
23 something - we was getting everybody off the boat.  
24 When everybody was off the boat, then that's when ...  
25 and myself and some other ... jumped in the water and  
26 tried to go under the boat, to see what we could see.

27 MS. BURER: You said you were responsible for  
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1 the boat, is that correct?

2 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes.

3 MS. BURER: Do you go out there in the day  
4 and take water temperatures or, what is part of your -

5 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Making sure that all  
6 them heaters are on on the engines, because if the  
7 heaters aren't in, it takes forever to start, so we  
8 keep the heaters on the engines. We make sure the  
9 bilges is not overflowing, pump the bilges. We don't -  
10 the elements outside the boat we don't really care  
11 unless we're going - unless we're going to do a  
12 training maneuver like teaching somebody to drive, or  
13 teaching somebody how to run the engine - that's the  
14 only time that we worry about the water temperature.

15 MS. BURER: How often do you all drill?

16 PETTY OFFICER TATE: We have - we drill?

17 MS. BURER: Uh-huh (yes) - with the boat.

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Oh, we have - we brought  
19 them back February 22<sup>nd</sup>, I think it is, we brought the  
20 boat back from Annapolis, from putting paint it, radar  
21 put on it, but prior to that, I mean, we haven't  
22 drilled since April on them - I mean since August of  
23 last year.

24 MS. BURER: Right.

25 PETTY OFFICER TATE: But we usually like, in  
26 the summer time, we drill three or four times a week to  
27 train people to get them qualified in it so it'd be



1 people who can operate it and know what they're doing  
2 while we're out there.

3 MS. BURER: Do you all do any kind of rescue  
4 drill?

5 PETTY OFFICER TATE: No, never. Pretty - we  
6 concentrate on engineering and cockpit ...

7 MS. BURER: Okay, and then as far as CPR  
8 training?

9 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I'm an electrician, so  
10 that's part of, you know, that's part of - we've got to  
11 requalify for it to be a CPR training, mainly  
12 electricity, but I think the Navy requires everybody to  
13 have CPR training every six months, so - or every year  
14 - I don't how the Red Cross CPR thing works. They try  
15 to qualify as much as possible, you know, if you don't  
16 remember, if you don't have your card, go get  
17 qualified.

18 MS. BURER: Right. Okay. All right, I don't  
19 have any questions at this time. Do you have some?

20 LT. BARANOWSKI: Lieutenant Baranowski, Coast  
21 Guard. When you jumped in the water, how - did you go  
22 underneath the water, or what -

23 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I went underneath.

24 LT. BARANOWSKI: What would you say - was it  
25 dirty water?

26 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Green sign, I seen like  
27 a green ... silhouette, cloudy and all I could see was

1 - if there was somebody there, I couldn't see  
2 somebody. I could see - I couldn't - I could see, you  
3 know, a couple inches in front of me. Because I pushed  
4 myself down, I see the child on the boat and I could  
5 see the Plexiglas and that's it. I tried - I think I  
6 tried to punch the Plexiglas or break it or something,  
7 but that was for naught.

8 LT. BARANOWSKI: What sign did you see?

9 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Was it a white and green  
10 or white and yellow? You couldn't - I mean I didn't  
11 see the whole sign, the whole name written, I just seen  
12 parts of, you know - I think the part of the boat that  
13 sticks out with the name on it, that's - I mean I ...  
14 tell you the truth, or whatever it is, I got down and I  
15 seen my hand was uppercutting something, but I don't  
16 know what I was uppercutting. ... cut myself.

17 LT. BARANOWSKI: About how long were you  
18 underneath the water and what were your actions  
19 underneath the water ...

20 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I wasn't underneath the  
21 water long. I'd say I was underneath the water about  
22 20 seconds, came back up for some air - went down to  
23 see if somebody was there, and I did - and I went down  
24 again, and I tried to stay a little longer and I  
25 couldn't see nothing, and I came back up. And that's  
26 when I got out of the water.

27 LT. BARANOWSKI: While you were in the water  
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1     were any other ... out there?

2                   PETTY OFFICER TATE:   I seen the ...   The only  
3     reason I have to remember was Commander Decker and  
4     Neblett that I seen in my own eyes, when I was in the  
5     water.   When I got out of the water and I got on the  
6     side of the boat, that's when I seen Lieutenant  
7     Commander Eisenhart and Petty Officer King.

8                   LT. BARANOWSKI:   The landing craft, did they  
9     see you -

10                  PETTY OFFICER TATE:   That's the whole name,  
11     the whole number.

12                  LT. BARANOWSKI:   What does that stand for?

13                  PETTY OFFICER TATE:   The ... craft unit.

14                  LT. BARANOWSKI:   Spell that, please?  
15     Assault?

16                  PETTY OFFICER TATE:   Assault craft unit.

17                  LT. BARANOWSKI:   Okay.

18                  PETTY OFFICER TATE:   227 unit - boat number  
19     27.

20                  LT. BARANOWSKI:   What are they used for at  
21     this property?

22                  PETTY OFFICER TATE:   To train ACU-2 units to  
23     get people ready -- be ready for when they go to their  
24     - the parent unit.   They train in how to operate the  
25     boat landing craft, manning the boat, engineering the  
26     boat.   To get them ready, you know, ready to take over  
27     from their active duty counterpart.

1 LT. BARANOWSKI: One more time, was the  
2 time frame that you first heard about that something  
3 had happened out there until you actually were on the  
4 scene - you said - how long did it take you, do you  
5 think?

6 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Three to five minutes.

7 LT. BARANOWSKI: Three to five minutes.

8 PETTY OFFICER TATE: It was quick. It was so  
9 quick.

10 LT. BARANOWSKI: And when you got out there,  
11 you said the vessel was drifting?

12 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes, sir.

13 LT. BARANOWSKI: Could you ... look ...  
14 looking at here, here's Fort McHenry, right here. This  
15 is pretty much where ... here, the Key Bridge, pretty  
16 much ... Which direction - what direction was it  
17 drifting?

18 PETTY OFFICER TATE: It was right about - I  
19 know the boat was in the channel - at first I thought  
20 it was going this way, right, at first. But after it  
21 was all said and done, we was way over here by Lehigh.  
22 Is that their sign?

23 LT. BARANOWSKI: ... showing it.

24 PETTY OFFICER TATE: You know, I could not -  
25 I could have sworn we was going towards the Inner  
26 Harbor, you know, that's what I - my sense ... we  
27 drifted towards the Inner Harbor, but of course, we was

1 going ... I couldn't ... As far as paying attention  
2 to that, I have no idea. I mean I wasn't actively  
3 paying attention to that area.

4 LT. BARANOWSKI: How quickly was that vessel  
5 drifting, do you think?

6 PETTY OFFICER TATE: It took a - we came in  
7 on the side of it, and it was - we got on side of it  
8 and it was drifting pretty hard, because we had shut  
9 the engines down and just kind of drift - actually  
10 mostly, when I pulled her out of the boat, out of the  
11 tip of the bow ramp, and he grabbed hold and he pushed  
12 off - he pushed the other boat away because it was  
13 coming quickly. We could have got crushed in between  
14 it, but we grabbed the tip and we pushed - you know he  
15 pushed it, pushed the other boat way out. My actual  
16 position, it was easy for us to throw the line in.

17 LT. BARANOWSKI: When you found the one 30-  
18 year-old female, you helped do CPR on her? You said  
19 you transferred her to the -

20 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Fire boat.

21 LT. BARANOWSKI: -- fire boat.

22 PETTY OFFICER TATE: Yes.

23 LT. BARANOWSKI: What happened when you  
24 transferred her to the fire boat? Did you go on the  
25 boat too?

26 PETTY OFFICER TATE: No, Commander Decker  
27 went on the fire boat with her. I went ahead back

1   there, because I was the only engineer on the boat,  
2   going back to secure the PTO, ... bow ramp up, clamp  
3   everything to make sure it was locked up tight. I  
4   headed back to the boat.

5                   LT. BARANOWSKI: Do you know what happened  
6   with the fire boat then?

7                   PETTY OFFICER TATE: No.

8                   MS. BURER: It's still going.

9                   LT. BARANOWSKI: Who was that - was he still  
10   performing CPR on her on the fire boat?

11                  PETTY OFFICER TATE: When the fire department  
12   came, they brought out the face mask that you squeeze  
13   to breathe, and he took over from me doing the chest  
14   compressions, and the fire department took the chest  
15   compressions, and they tried ... he said he's not going  
16   to leave her. He kept telling her, I'm not going to  
17   leave you.

18                  LT. BARANOWSKI: How many people were on the  
19   fire boat that you transferred her to?

20                  PETTY OFFICER TATE: I don't know - two guys,  
21   probably two ... three - three or four? What I see --  
22   I didn't look in the cockpit, I didn't look in the  
23   pilot house or anything like that.

24                  LT. BARANOWSKI: Do you remember if that's  
25   the same fire boat that ... transferred the little girl  
26   to?

27                  PETTY OFFICER TATE: There was nobody in that  
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1 boat - no victims on that boat. That boat was clear.

2 LT. BARANOWSKI: Okay.

3 PETTY OFFICER TATE: So they could  
4 concentrate on the one we had. The other fire boat  
5 probably left.

6 LT. BARANOWSKI: Okay.

7 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I mean not that I could  
8 see. But again, ... tunnel vision at that time.

9 LT. BARANOWSKI: Did Commander Decker then go  
10 back to shore with the vessel, or do you know?

11 PETTY OFFICER TATE: He left with the vessel.  
12 I don't know what happened to him.

13 LT. BARANOWSKI: You didn't see him back?

14 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I didn't see him back  
15 until I got back from the hospital.

16 LT. BARANOWSKI: Okay. That's it.

17 MS. BURER: I don't have any further  
18 questions. Do you?

19 LT. BARANOWSKI: No further questions.

20 MS. BURER: Will you acknowledge that this  
21 has been recorded?

22 PETTY OFFICER TATE: I do. Yes, my name is  
23 Petty Officer Shawn Tate, and I acknowledge that this  
24 is a recorded session.

25 MS. BURER: Thank you.

26 (Whereupon, the interview in the above  
27 caption matter was concluded.)

